

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.-47. Cancelled.

48. (Currently Amended) A nucleic acid sequence encoding a fusion protein, said fusion protein comprising an *atonal*-associated amino acid sequence ~~or fragment thereof~~ and ~~a desired~~ an amino acid sequence that is not an *atonal*-associated amino acid sequence, wherein the *atonal*-associated amino acid sequence comprises about 80% identity to SEQ ID NO:58 and comprises at least about 80% identity to SEQ ID NO:70.

49.-54. Cancelled.

55. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising an *atonal*-associated nucleic acid sequence in combination with a delivery vehicle, wherein said delivery vehicle ~~results in delivery of a therapeutically effective amount of~~ delivers an *atonal*-associated nucleic acid sequence into a cell, wherein the composition further comprises an additional nucleic acid sequence that is not an *atonal*-associated nucleic acid sequence, wherein the *atonal*-associated amino acid sequence comprises about 80% identity to SEQ ID NO:58 and comprises at least about 80% identity to SEQ ID NO:70.

56. (New) The composition of claim 48, wherein the amino acid sequence that is not an *atonal*-associated amino acid sequence comprises a protein transduction domain.

57. (New) The composition of claim 56, wherein the protein transduction domain comprises HIV Tat protein.